EMIGRATION EXPERIENCE FROM THE MADRAS PRESIDENCY
The island of Mauritius stood distinct in importing a large number of emigrants from India, during the first half of the 19th century (see table I). Yet again Calcutta supplied a larger number of emigrants to Mauritius, than Madras (see Table II). The number of emigrants embarked for Mauritius from Calcutta for the period 1834-56 worked out to 1,25,352\(^1\) (including men, women and children), whereas for the same period Madras Presidency supplied only about 62,425.\(^2\) Out of the total 1,25,352 emigrants, the male emigrants from Calcutta constitute about 1,00,414 and of Madras 45,769. The number of females that accompanied the Calcutta male emigrants worked out to 15,581 (including children) and Madras male emigrants to 7,966.

**TABLE - I**

**STATEMENT SHOWING THE NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS EMBARKED FOR MAURITIUS AND WEST INDIAN ISLANDS DURING 1834-1856**

**FROM MADRAS PRESIDENCY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>FROM MADRAS TO MAURITIUS</th>
<th>RETURNED EMIGRANTS FROM MAURITIUS</th>
<th>TO WEST INDIAN ISLANDS BRITISH TRINIDAD JAMAICA GUIANA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td></td>
<td>686</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td></td>
<td>2692</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Value 1</td>
<td>Value 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>5212</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td>778</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>439</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>14634</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>2547</td>
<td>1064</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>1318</td>
<td>232</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>1364</td>
<td>3485</td>
<td>1509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>2187</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>3727</td>
<td></td>
<td>473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>3714</td>
<td></td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>5718</td>
<td></td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>4525</td>
<td></td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>7284</td>
<td></td>
<td>427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>6718</td>
<td></td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>4381</td>
<td>1278</td>
<td>896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>62,425</td>
<td>8,249</td>
<td>7,653</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE II

**STATEMENT SHOWING THE NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS EMBARKED FROM CALCUTTA TO MAURITIUS BETWEEN THE YEARS 1834-1856**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEARS</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From 1834</td>
<td>15,049</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to 1842</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From 1843</td>
<td>62,291</td>
<td>10,408</td>
<td>4,348</td>
<td>1,525</td>
<td>78,482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to 1852</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>8,315</td>
<td>1,310</td>
<td>1,016</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>6,785</td>
<td>1,013</td>
<td>792</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>5,811</td>
<td>1,595</td>
<td>1,023</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>2,163</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>547</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>1,00,414</td>
<td>15,581</td>
<td>7,857</td>
<td>1,588</td>
<td>1,25,352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While doing an in-depth study on Emigration experience from Madras Presidency a few questions have to be raised as from what regions did the emigrants leave? Did they go in groups or as families? Did they emigrate from neighbouring villages or widely separated villages or districts?³

As far as the Madras Presidency was concerned the available records at Government Archives at Egmore, Madras certainly gives with some precision, the names of villages and towns from which the 19th century emigrants emigrated.⁴ As far from Vishakapatnam in the North-east, Hyderabad in
the North, Srirangapatnam (Mysore) Tellichery (near Mahe), Calicut, Travancore and Alleppy in the east and Tuticorin and Tirunelveli in the south, the emigrants were procured. The coastal regions of the Coramandal and Malabar contributed more emigrants compared with the interior of Madras presidency. As far as the composition of caste was concerned, Agamooodyars, Caravay, Kallan, Cockee, Saanan, Chetti, Coonbee, Gentoo, Maratha, Moodaly, Malabari, Pillay, Pariah, Padayachee, Reddy, Thevar, Vannian, Vaniel, Vellalan, Yedien, constituted the emigrant group. The names, and the caste of emigrant indicate, that they went in groups, and seldom as families. As far as emigration to Mauritius, they emigrated from the neighbouring villages. But for the French Reunion islands, emigrants from widely separated places were procured. It indicated that they were collected from far of places of the southern part of India.

The 19th century Madras Presidency certainly lacked transport and communication facilities. In spite of absence of vital communication system the emigrants aspired to go out of the country. Generally, the maistries, made the coolies to walk about 200 miles. Only on emergency or on special cases, they were carried through bullock carts and boats. Regarding the crossing of ocean it was an another side of the emigrants' adventure. While ship building itself was something to be improved, it was a difficult task for
the Government as well for the private parties to secure ships in India. Col. Watson was the first person to build a ship of force in the river Hoogly in the year 1781. The first 'Nonsuch' was about 500 tons 'burden' capable of mounting 32 guns. It was also usable for the purpose of commerce too.\textsuperscript{6}

However such ships were not useful for longer distance. Hence "it was found indispensable that vessels required for the conveyance of emigrants from India to Mauritius should be engaged in England".\textsuperscript{7} But such difficulties had never been an hindrance to the shipment of emigrants, because, there was a regular and continuous source of trade between India and the Mauritius, and a much larger number of shipping was always available at Calcutta (see Appendix IV).\textsuperscript{8} When a ship was laden with rice, which was the general description of cargo, her in between decks would remain empty and the owner or commander would always be found willing to carry coolies on moderate terms.\textsuperscript{9} Many ships in the regular trade did compete with one another. From Calcutta the highest fare was Rs.45/- and the lowest Rs.27/- to Mauritius. From Madras it was lesser than that to Mauritius. The ship which had gone to London touched Madras and Mauritius to pick up and to land emigrants apart from its cargo. Yet, though the freight from Madras to Mauritius
Cross-section of a coole ship
was very little, most of the emigrants had been shipped through from Calcutta.

The average expense for the maistries for bringing the coolie from the interior to Madras was Rs.4/- to Rs.5/-.\(^{10}\) Their average stay at Madras before shipment was about 20 days. Letter correspondence appeared to be a dream of those days. Emigrants themselves did not realise the value of it. However, around 1850 provision for the conveyance of letters and money were put into operation. The secretary of the Government at Mauritius would forward such things to the Government of Madras. The same would be despatched to the district collector, and from the district collector, it would reach its destination. Yet there was no such facility from Madras to Mauritius for the emigrants family. For the first time in 1850 the emigrants utilised this mode of communication to send their savings to their relatives in India.\(^{11}\)

The actual constraints, for the emigrants, starts with his embarkation. Since most of them were from the lower poorer classes in society, their food habits, dressing habits and social contacts were not up to the requirements of the ship journey. So the change in their day's life during voyage was not comfortable. They were given accommodation "between decks". The standard height of the
'between deck' was 6 feet 6 inches. The bottom of the ship underwater level was known as 'hold'. Cargo and passengers' goods were stored in the 'hold'. The smell and heat emanating from the cargo penetrated into the 'in-between decks'. This effluvia was a constant danger to the health of coolies.

Aboard the ship, there were certain regulations to be observed by the emigrants. The male emigrants to be divided into three watches; one watch being always on the upper deck, but not to be required to assist the duties of the ship beyond washing the deck. The whole of the emigrants, male, female, including children, were to be required every day to come on the upper deck in moderate weather at certain hours to be fixed by the commander, and should remain on deck atleast one hour. A fatigue party to be formed from male emigrants daily in turn for the purpose of cleaning the lower deck.

The feelings and memories of the coolie experience have been elusive, since we don't have much information on that score. May be the 'Log Book' of those emigrants' ship might certainly give more clues about the emigrants' life, aboard the ship. Yet some records available did reveal some account of their resentments and encounters. There were cases of suicide by jumping over board. Death due to sea sickness,
dysentery, debility, cholera, small pox and superstitious beliefs are recorded.\textsuperscript{14} The aggravation of disease, on many occasions, was due to the method of their cooking and diet during the passage. For instance, the emigrants persisted in keeping much of their boiled rice after 24 hours, and eat it when it became 'sore' and unwholesome, and neither entreaty nor remonstrance could prevail them.\textsuperscript{15} And one of the worst accidents could be mentioned now as an example for the encounters of emigrants in which almost all the emigrants lost their lives.

A vessel Futtah Salam left Madras on December 3, 1851 with 234 statutory emigrants for Port Louis.\textsuperscript{16} On the 25th of December it experienced a severe hurricane and she was partly dismasted and disabled, in which 50 of the coolies had died. Again on 9th January 1852 at about 50 miles north of Mauritius, a second hurricane overtook the ship, and by this time water was taken all over and it entered into the 'hold', the Cargo, whereby the cargo bags stowed and choked the pumps. The water in the hold increased to 8 feet and the fresh water cask, kept for drinking water broke a drift and were stove in. The greater part of their contents were either lost or rendered undrinkable.\textsuperscript{17} After the second hurricane the master of the ship reduced the allowance of drinking water to a wine glass, per day to each person. Owing to this the poor emigrants had started taking sea
water (salt water). In fact, it was this that resulted in the death of the rest of the emigrants.  

Crimping (sic-1840's) and the encounters of women emigrants were the other facets of the emigration experience of Madras Presidency. As and when slavery was abolished and the indentured system introduced in India, another surreptitious business, i.e. Crimping (sic), emerged as a by-product of emigration. Crimping (sic), an act of entrapping people for services, at Reunion and Mauritius was reported by Charles Biden, the Protector of emigrants in his letter dated 27.5.1846 to the Chief Secretary at Fort St.George. It is evident, from the letter that the trapping of people as emigrants was done by the crimps (sic) - the native agents, long before the organised system of emigration was introduced by the Government. The abuse of labourers hardly attracted the attention of the company authorities. Even after passing the Act of XXXII of 1837, the authorities in the district permitted emigration, without proper check and verification by the government. Ultimately the French at Pondichery, and the unregistered agents and their accomplice, did indulge in this transaction.

In this clandestine system, both men and women were employed as maistries and petty maistries, who in turn
induced and seduced the common and illiterate people of this presidency. J. J. Bishop, the magistrate of Tanjore in August 1850, in his letter reported that he had "just in two months, punished 38 crimps under the Act of 1839 (see Table III), having been fully convicted of seducing British subjects to embark." However, it was a difficult task to check crimping in Madras presidency due to several reasons.

**TABLE III**

**CASES OF CRIMPING BROUGHT BEFORE THE MAGISTRACY OF TANJORE FROM 1849 TO 1850**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF CASES</th>
<th>NO. OF PERSONS</th>
<th>NO. OF CASES PUNISHED</th>
<th>NO. OF PERSONS PUNISHED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, it was carried on at French territory, where a greater facilities were offered by the wider boundary. Secondly the average pay per head or price for coolies supplied, were higher than that of the British. Thirdly, the punishment for crimps were very light and the actual agents might escape, whereas the poor, innocent petty maistries
were the victims of it. So the checking of this traffic, did not bring any expected results or change directions.

The magistrates of Madras, South Arcot, Vellore, Trichinopoly and Tanjore had reported crimping (sic) in their jurisdiction.\textsuperscript{22} The South Arcot magistrate remarked in his report that in all cases which had come under his cognizance some intoxicating substance had been used, "to induce, men, women and children, which in effect confused the minds of the inveigled persons and prevented their exercising self will". He further stated that "he would not be able to ascertain what this substance was, which was powerful and lasting in its effects".\textsuperscript{23}

Another peculiar but inducing factor in crimping (sic) was the appointment of women crimps (sic) in different districts. Even in the year 1850, it was widely known that women were more powerful in securing larger number of emigrants. The Mauritius emigration Agent in his explanation to the Chief Secretary confessed the fact as mentioned below.

"I have the honor to inform you that I have employed the same means in collecting coolies that was made use of during 1845, 1846 and 1847, during which time several women were employed in collecting emigrants and did not myself see any objection to their employment".\textsuperscript{24}
Hereby, "the system of recruiting labourers for Mauritius was faulty" due to crimping. It had been pointed out that "there was no shipment of coolies without being followed by a crowd of suppliants throwing themselves at the feet of Mauritius emigration agent to beg the release of some relative or other".25

As the demand for labourers increased at Bourbon or Reunion, in 1843 after the abolition of slavery, the number of the crims (sic) also increased in the British soil. The Mauritius emigration agent himself in his memorandum, submitted to the chief Secretary at Fort St.George, pointed out that a number of people were taken into Pondichery by the crims (sic) against the free will and consent of the coolies. In order to avoid this he cautioned to warn the public through district authorities, that Madras was the only port for emigration.26 It was combined through other sources and publics that there were gangsters in the British-French borders, who often abducted the individual labourers from the hands of licenced British-Indian maistries on the way to Madras.

For this illegal trade the French and the British authorities had given encouragement by receiving bribes.27

As things became worse and the Mauritius emigration agent,
could not procure much, he demanded even "entire stoppage of emigration on account of the large number being carried away into Pondichery and Karaikal". Having noticed all these developments, the Governor-in-Council, urged the Magistrate and the Assistant magistrate of South Arcot District to "use their exertions to prevent as far as possible the interference of the French coolie maistries with the people of the Company's territories and strictly to enforce the law incase of crimping (sic)".

However, there were many complaints to the Governor regarding crimping in the Madras presidency. One such was from one native Krishnasamy and 15 others of Madrasapatnam to the Governor alleging that the natives of the British subjects were forcibly taken to Pondichery and the Mauritius emigrations agents and maistries encouraged such movements. Based on these complaints the Chief Magistrate and the Superintendent of police was ordered to enquire about the complaint. Later the report of the Chief Magistrate and the Superintendent not only confirmed the complaint, but brought out few more details on this subject. The report exposed that the victims not only belonged to the Madras districts, but also from other distant districts also. It was also exposed, under this system, not hundreds but thousands of coolies were procured in the British territories and most of
them were shipped for Reunion from the ports of Pondichery and Karaikal.31

The prices that were offered at Pondichery for each emigrant at various times had been rupees 20, 30, 40 and at one time there was a competition between two houses at Pondichery, then the rate was rupees 70 for an able man, whereas at Madras the maistry or a contractor received only about rupees 5 per emigrant. Mr. Bishop, the magistrate of Tanjore in his letter dated 28th June 1850 stated that only the rejected coolies were sent to Mr. Gabb the Mauritius emigration agent at Madras, after examination by medical officer at Karaikal.32

The most cruel injustice constantly inflicted under this system was the embarkation of children below 16 years against their consent and frequently without the knowledge of their parents or guardians. Those who were brought for embarkation were abducted, and their friends and relatives in search of them reached Madras or Pondichery only after the ship had left their respective ports. While these matters were brought to the notice of Mr. Biden, the Protector of Emigrants at Madras, he comprehended, that "his duty was to countersign the certificates of the emigration agent, and his power did not exceed beyond that".33 No doubt, the cases of crimping increased in the second half of the 19th century. The question that emerged
in the minds of authorities was; how to stop crimping? and who was to initiate the action?

Though not many had the initiative and firmness to take action on this issue there were some at least who did a thorough check on this subject, especially Edward Maltby, the Magistrate of South Arcot district. He had given the maximum attention on this subject to the Secretary at Madras. He observed that "the demand for labourers in Reunion was so great that vessels were continually arriving at Pondicherry to carry on the coolie trade. The coolies were furnished by the French agencies, the former being fully British subjects" (see Table IV). The noteworthy agents at Pondicherry in order were: Mr. Bedier, Messers. Amalrick and Co., Messers. Decolons and Co., Messers. D'Souza and Co., Messers Vinay and Co., Mr. Arnachalla Chettiyar and Mr. Chinnasamy Chettiyar.

Mr. Bedier had links with French higher authorities. He was also the nephew of the Pondicherry Governor (1851) and came from Reunion exclusively to carry out this trade. He was even once, arrested by the Magistrate of Rajamundry in 1849, while he illegally carried coolies from the port of Coringa. Almost all those agents had not less than 250 maistries in and around Madras presidency to carry out this business.
TABLE IV
NUMBER OF COOLIES EMBARKED FROM THE FRENCH TERRITORY
DURING 1851

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACE OF EMBARKATION</th>
<th>MONTH &amp; YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF COOLIES EMBARKED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>January 1851</td>
<td>525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>February 1851</td>
<td>420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>March 1851</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>April 1851</td>
<td>670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>May 1851</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pondichery</td>
<td>June 1851</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karaikal</td>
<td></td>
<td>850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3,876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even the native (British) officials were actively involved in this traffic. A writer in the office of the Magistrate, the daughter of an havildar of the veteran battalion at Cuddalore station and the principal Sudder Ameen Venkataragavachary, were all involved in this traffic, and not to mention of some village servants and peons. These people received advances from the Pondichery houses to furnish a certain number of coolies within a specified time.

In order to have a smooth traffic, the agents, maistries and petty maistries employed so many means to
procure labourers. Some of the victims though were grown ups, they were ignorant of difference between Reunion and Mauritius, French and British territory. Children and youth of both sexes were stolen for the purpose of being sold to the commanders of the French ships. The consequence was the prevalence of much alarm and misery among the native community. The persons who practiced this offence waited and watched for children in the streets and tempted them to eat cakes or fruits or other eatables containing drugs and then carried them off, before they were 'missed'.

There were typical cases, where the Magistrates established the fact. Even though the French law did not permit any emigrant below 18 years for embarkation, the influential agents, through corrupt practices had broken the regulations. By assessing the system the magistrate at Cuddalore, Mr. Maltby called it as "actual slavery," in his report to the Government. He by informing the Government authorities, about this, he sought more powers to deal with crimping in his jurisdiction. He had also requested the Chief secretary to dismiss the principal 'Sadder Ameen' Venkataragavachary, a writer Tatavapillay and another person Ponnusamy to be transferred to some other station.

Under these circumstances it created much heart burning among parents wives and children. Even people were afraid of
sending their children to schools and other places without
their being always guarded, since the traffic was aided by
public servants. It was also impossible for the magistrate
of South Arcot to check this evil, because of the
intermixing of the English and French villages. The other
difficulty the English had to face was, the labourers
themselves on many occasions personally at their own risk
volunteered to go to French territory, hence, it made any
police arrangement extremely difficult.

Some other causes which could be attributed to crimping
were: the Pondichery Emigration Agent and the examining
medical officer were not paid salaries but paid from the
fees collected on the coolies they examined and passed.
Naturally their personal interest was not the closer
examination of the validity and credibility of emigration
but of monetary in nature. Once a captain David of the ship
'Joseph and Claire' publicly advertised in the Le Moniteur
official of the 28th February 1851, that he would give
Rs.45/- per native who embarked in his ship.\textsuperscript{42} A letter from
an intercepted crimp also has showed that in the year 1851
alone nearly 51 children had been sent from Nagapatnam
alone.\textsuperscript{43}
## STATEMENT OF PERSONS BROUGHT BEFORE THE MAGISTRY IN SOUTH ARCOT FOR CRIMPING AND KIDNAPPING FROM 1ST JANUARY TO JUNE 1851

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Prisoners' Name</th>
<th>Sentence Awarded and Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14.01.1851</td>
<td>Veerapen</td>
<td>Enticing a women named Bungaroo at Vellore-to proceed to Pondichery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Varathan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Fine of Rs.50/- or in default to be imprisoned for 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Not fully proved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>29.01.1851</td>
<td>Caleyamoorthy</td>
<td>Aiding two persons to emigration Fined Rs.100/- or in default 2 months imprisonment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>28.02.1851</td>
<td>Paracolunday</td>
<td>Enticing 3 boys-and tried to take them to Pondichery-Bourbon. Fine of Rs.600/- or in default 9 months imprisonment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>05.04.1851</td>
<td>Lagor</td>
<td>Fine of Rs.25/- or 3months imprisonment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.04.1851</td>
<td>Vauthiaun</td>
<td>Fine of Rs.100/- to each or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Coopomoothoo 6 months imprisonment.</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>29.05.1851</td>
<td>Pavady Padiachy</td>
<td>Both fined for Rs.100/- each or 3 months imprisonment.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Poodoochattam)</td>
<td>2. Parathasey Padiachy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>02.06.1851</td>
<td>Deveyanatha Pillay</td>
<td>Fine of Rs.800/- or one year imprisonment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>2. ............ Fine of Rs.400/- or six months imprisonment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Thathava Pillai 3 and 4 released without any evidence

4. Ponnoosamy Pillai

8. 05.06.1851

1. Arunachala Moodly 1. Fine of Rs.200/- or imprisonment of 3 months

2. Ammamootoo 2. 2 and 3 released without any evidence

3. Arjoonen

In the process of emigration the number of coolies shipped for Reunion from Pondichery and Karaikal during the 3 years (1848, 1849, and 1850) exceeded 32,000. Out of which no information was available about any return emigrants. People of Madras, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, South Arcot, Karaikal, Nagapatnam constituted the major number. The number of French subjects was very few. Moreover it appears from the records that "there was not a single instance a coolie having ever gone and offered himself voluntarily as an emigrant to Reunion".

Some agents of French and English kept women of immoral character to induce people for illicit relations with them, and then took them to Pondichery. Those who were kidnapped, and smuggled were kept at godowns together (men and women). After some days they were grouped into families of children and parents, wives and husbands, just as the way the agents thought it fit. Finally they were represented to the
authorities as if they were of families, who came of their own for emigration and thus obtained permission.\textsuperscript{49} Monetarily the maximum benefit was extracted by the agents - around Rs. 30 to 35 per head. Besides them the police functionary who, received, no pay from the Government, and who were supposed to have ascertained the willingness of the coolies, got a fee of one rupee per coolie. The medical officer also received the same one rupee per head.

For exposing all these matters to the Government, Mr. Maltby, the Magistrate at Cuddalore was commended for his brilliant work. He was in turn authorised to incur a moderate expenditure for the purpose of obtaining information and other related requirements. He was further asked to trace the individual agents of the employers of Pondichery, which was not at all possible. Whereas the Governor observing the whole sequence of crimping found "that nothing less than a revival of the slave trade in its worst form conducted under false pretences of regulations", resolved to send a letter to the Governor of the French Establishments in India,\textsuperscript{50} that the Company "Government have deemed it necessary to refer the question to superior authority". Hence, the French authority should amend its policy towards emigration.
However, the Governor of the French establishment turned down the allegation and replied in the negative saying that "the French Government have regulated the emigration upon its territory in such manner that the right of humanity and the free exercise of the will can never be interfered without reprehension and reparation and repeat the affirmation made by the late Governor that prudence and good faith have never ceased to attend the French emigration".\textsuperscript{51} The Governor at Pondichery in his previous letters of 11th, 15th and 23rd of July also affirmed the same that "he cannot take any measures to prevent emigrants going to foreign countries from Pondichery, since the ACT XIV of 1839 was not applicable to the French territories in India.\textsuperscript{52}

When the Magistrate of South Arcot, the Chief Secretary and the President-in-Council were taking elaborate and inextricable means and measures to prevent emigration through the French territories, the Court of Directors by ignoring all such measures directed the Madras Government to "allow emigration at Pondichery on the same condition on which emigration is carried on to the Mauritius".\textsuperscript{53} Thereby the efforts taken by the East India Company officials came to a stand-still. By 1860, under the Anglo-French convention, full freedom was given to the French in India in the field of emigration. Hence, the crimping continued as
long as the indenture system prevailed in India till the beginning of the 20th century.

During the early export of labourers to Mauritius and Reunion only very few emigrated as families. Most of the labourers went alone leaving their wives and children with the care of the elders of the joint family, and seldom realised the need for their wives and women at the place where they intended to go. The womenfolk also did not realise the fact that they were part of them, thereby they failed to persuade their men to take them. Apart from their unwillingness to go, the Indian custom did not permit them, where the women had only one legitimate role that of a wife. Though a few women had willingness to go, the distance of the journey and the life style abroad slightly modified their option. Moreover, the absence of their husbands, to them was nothing but a "sea-faring trade", which would be lost for a few years. As an outcome the Indian immigrant society at Mauritius and Reunion turned out as men-dominated, rarely having women. The consequence was nothing but a problem, which was "in gravity and potency in paramount the scarcity of females among Indian immigrants."56

The labourers by the prospect of gain who left their wives behind, stumbled and tumbled on the females, available
at Mauritius, quickly and thereby occurred problems of adjustment. Five out of six murders committed on the Island of Mauritius were perpetrated by Indian through motives of jealousy on associates cohabiting with their females.\textsuperscript{57} Since the female proportion was smaller "it was impossible for every Indian to have a wife of his own even if he wished". This situation was made worse by the fact that in some cases of Indians, such as shopkeepers, land owners, etc. who were in comfortable position had more than one wife, though they were perhaps married to one and kept the other as concubine. No doubt, women were of a "scarce commodity" for this group in the 19th century.\textsuperscript{58}

Though the laws have provided punishments in cases of adultery or abduction of females, the prosecution of such cases were attended with so many delays and so much expense. Justice in this realm was said to be beyond the reach of the Indian immigrants. There were several instances, where the injured husband had attempted to recover his wife, but failed after spending several years' saving in paying lawyers. Hence in the year 1840, the Government made a proposal to enforce the introduction of a proportionate number of females to remedy this inconveniences.\textsuperscript{59} Under this regulations it was suggested to encourage women to emigrate with their husbands. The Act gave right to the
Governor-General-in-Council (India) to fix a certain proportion of women as the minimum which should sail on any ship carrying emigrants. But the strict enforcement of the legislative provision was not possible due to some reasons. First of all the home authorities disallowed this proposal. Secondly seldom, people came forward to go as family. Upon this, the Government of the day could not send many women emigrants as required by their colonies. On the other hand it "insisted upon a larger proportion in the case of foreign colonies.

As the situation was very bad at Mauritius during the year 1851, the authorities over there insisted that "as many women as possible should be shipped by each vessel." However there was argument for and against the introduction of single women. It was felt that "although the introduction of the single woman will contribute to alleviate the evils detailed at length, yet still this would be but a palliative instead of a radical cure." Any way the demand for women was more and their cost was very high.

During this time, the emigration agent at Madras was asked to allot twenty shillings to single female emigrant for more comfortable and safe accommodation in the ship. The Government at Mauritius encouraged their men immigrants, by offering the following concessions, to bring their wives and
family members. If a new emigrant, during his contract period went to India and brought back his wife to Mauritius, he was considered as old immigrant. But if he returned after the expiration of contract period, he had to pay his passage money, which was between Rs.15/- and Rs.18/-. If a man sent for his legitimate wife, from his country, on her arrival, he would also get the ticket of old immigrant. If a man brought men of his district with their wives or wives of men, who were already in Mauritius, would get Rs.10/- (equal to £ 1) for each women he had brought; and in the case of the new immigrants arrived with his legitimate wife was to be given the ticket of old immigrant after three years of contract instead of 5 years.

The craze for money, not only tempted the labourers at Mauritius and Reunion, but the ship captains, labour agents and the natives of India to venture into the business of carrying women folk to other colonies in the 19th century. Carrying them for money seemed to be a secondary, for the sailors, the primary being the abuse of women on the way. The aversion referred to owes its origin in part to the indignities that Indian women were subjected to by pirates of 18th century. When the Moghuls were ruling India pirates worked great havoc. Clement Downing in his 'History of the Indian Wars,' states that "on a certain island English pirates abused the women in a very vile manner", while they
were on board a ship that sailed from India in 1719. This kind of treatment was mooted on Indian women not only by the English, but by the French too, and not to mention of others, who had always had their own share. Here is a classic example of the French.

Sometime in March 1854 a French ship 'August' sailed from Karaikal (sic) for Reunion, with 300 emigrants of Madras presidency. But she returned in April on account as was alleged of Cholera having broken out among the emigrants. The emigrants were landed and encamped on the seashore. A report of the circumstances was made to the Supreme French authority at Pondichery. Meanwhile a medical aid was sent down and only then, the facts became known to the Governor General of the French settlements, which forced him to issue a commission for full investigation. But at the same time all efforts were taken to suppress the fact and to preserve secrecy.

Yet, the fact being - soon after the ship had sailed from Karaikal (sic), the captain Le Row, medical officer Godinot, the mate, the master attendant and the cook, began to ill use the women emigrants. When the male emigrants intervened they were threatened with dire consequences and the all of them were supplied with half-cooked rice, and the supply of water was denied and only sea water was
provided.\textsuperscript{65} When the whole crowd insisted that they be taken back to the port of embarkation, it was done, as the crew could not manage with the emigrants.

When the ship crew were brought to trial at Pondichery, it was declared that the captain, the mate, the master and the cook were the ones that raped the three female emigrants. In one or two instances death was the result. Due to the lack of food and consumption of sea water sickness came and twenty of the emigrants died. Some of the emigrants were thrown overboard by the crew, before even life was extinct. Almost, all of the emigrants were beaten and ill-treated.\textsuperscript{66} If this being the crews' attitude, one cannot imagine about the life of the women emigrants in a unknown country where, everything was new.

But in spite of these hardships the women emigrants continued to go to Mauritius and Reunion. At the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, the proportion of females from Madras presidency considerably exceeded that of Calcutta. It was due to the absence of strong prejudice among Madras women against leaving the country. For the same reason the Mauritius Government required larger number of women from Madras and not from other regions.\textsuperscript{67} The females that usually emigrated were the wives, and relatives of
NO. OF FEMALE EMIGRANTS PER 1000 MALES EMBARKED TO MAURITIUS FROM CALCUTTA AND MADRAS PORTS
labourers, who were already there. Generally, those women belonged to ryots of the Sudra caste.

The proportion of male female ratio of Madras and Calcutta worked out to 5.75:1 and 6.5:1 respectively. The village names of the Madras presidency, from where the emigrants were procured indicates that, the emigrants belonged to one single village or near by villages, and belonged to same region or same language groups. This is only in reference to the organised system of the Madras. But under the unorganised French system, different group of people, from different districts were collected and shipped.

Even though the communication facilities of this period was far below the necessity, it had not deterred the emigrants leaving this presidency. Crimping which had its origin in 1840's continued throughout the 19th century in spite of the stricter laws. So this 'Actual Slavery' to some extent created much heart burning among the public.

While the Madras port was meant for Mauritius emigration, by the English, Pondichery and Karaikal were fixed by the French for Reunion. The misunderstanding it created between the two did not make any serious threat to their relation in India. Women emigrants of this period continued to suffer ever since they determined to embark. Even after their arrival at Mauritius, they had to face
situations especially the law relating to marriages which complicated their life styles. The marriage itself, whether it was, Christian, Hindu or Muslim, was not legal and only civil marriages were legalised. This denial gave room for, the persons who married according to religious rites to discard their wives after few years of married life. Thus the Indian women emigrants not only suffered in their voyage but also after they settled down for their life-work in a new world.

1. Geoghegan J., Note on Emigration from India, Government Press, Calcutta, 1873, pp.79-81

2. Ibid., pp.2-77


4. The following places were recorded as from where emigrants were procured: Arcot, Alleppy, Andaponpetty, Bellary, Ballajeepettay, Bangalore, Canaculam, Cunnool, Cockeenada, Cuddalore, Combaconum, Candy, Carolum, Chevalpottor, Coimbatore, Chingleput, Cuddapah, Cochin, Collaray, Calicut, Chedumbrum, Coringa, Chundamonry, Gunjum, Guntoor, Karaikal, Mayavaram, Madras, Madura, Mannargodi, Nagoor, Nellore, Nedumangalam, Nagapattam, Osso Vellore, Pondichery, Poolangaul, Parangepettay, Poneritty, Pattoor, Puthalore, Povriasum, Rayavellore, Rajahuhendram, Ramavaram, Rajamundry, Ranipetech, St. Thomas Mount, Salem, Sembour, Sevasungary, Sevasungam, Seringa patnam, Tallecherry, Tellichery, Tirumangalam, Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Tirunelvelly, Trinqualebar, Theneary Coothanoor, Travancore, Trevear, Vytahepergoel, Vedarimungalam, Vongole, Vellore, Vizagapattam, Visoovanagaram, Wandawash and Walajahpet.


**Expenditure incurred in bringing a coolie to Madras before Shipment**

Gratuity received on being examined and passed by Collector Rs. 1 0 0
Batta on the way to Madras 0 8 0
Average of batta spent while collecting 0 8 0
Twenty days batta at Madras 1 14 0
Pawn leaves at embarkation 0 4 0

Total expense 4 2 0
A sum paid by the Government to maistries per head 5 12 0
Balance or gain to the maistry or agent 1 10 0

Out of this balance the maistries had to defray the expense for keeping up of the depot, travelling expenses of petty maistries, and the loss sustained by desertions.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Names of the sender and the addressee</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Amount sent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Arnasalampillay S/o Mootocarpapillay To mother-in-law</td>
<td>Alathor Conadoo Trichy District</td>
<td>Rs. 25/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vollaydum To sister-in-law</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rs. 30/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Tharemon S/O Sevendalingam to his wife</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rs. 20/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Mootooarpapillay S/o Appopillay to his sister-in-law Coundalam</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rs. 50/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Mardamotto S/o Veerabadran to his wife Mootoo Veerayee
    Kelakoorcheeconadoo Trichy District Rs. 23/-

6. Mootoo Veeran S/o Murday to his mother Angamah
    " Rs. 15/-

7. Armoogam S/o Veeran to his father Veeran
    " Rs. 10/-

12. Huquettee Ly-Tio-Fane Pineo, Lured Away, The Life History of Indian Cane Workers in Mauritius, Mahatma Gandhi Institute, Moka, Mauritius, 1984, p.129

13. Ibid.

14. Public Consultation, Madras, Vol. 774, 12th November, 1844

15. Ibid., Vol. 773, 13th August, 1844

16. Ibid., Vol. 878, 2nd March, 1851

17. Ibid., Vol. 882, 4th May, 1852

18. Ibid., Vol. 884, 25th May, 1852

19. Ibid., Vol. 797, 29th May, 1846

20. Ibid., Vol. 801, 15th September, 1846

21. Ibid., Vol. 853, 3rd August, 1850

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid., Vol. 855, 31st October, 1850

25. Ibid., Vol. 882, 3rd May, 1852

26. Ibid., Vol. 859, 18th January, 1851

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 25th February, 1851

29. Ibid., Vol. 860, 8th April, 1851
30. See Appendix V.

31. Public Consultation, Madras, Vol. 864, 24th June 1851

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid. Vol. 865, 15th July 1851

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Coollun (kullan) aged sixteen, son of Terumalay Moodily, of Kanchipuram, in Chingleput district, belonging to weaver community once went to his sister's husband's (Vyapoory Moodily) house at Vandavash. One day when he was in the market place, about noon, a man met him and asked him to have a drink (liquor). When he had told him of his inability to buy, the man bought him two anna's worth of liquor. After having the drink the lad under the influence of the intoxicating stuff followed the man up to another place, Vellimodoopettah, where he recovered himself. As he wanted to return home, pleaded with the man to allow him. But the man refused and threatened to take him up to the authorities as thief and he was made to sleep with him in a house at the place. Next day morning the man told the lad that there were looms at Pondichery, where he could find work and earn his livelihood. By soothing words he took the lad through jungles to Pondichery. And again at place called Cottacoopum, he bought two annas worth of liquor and led him to Pondichery and handed over to Arnachallapillay of Cosapallium the next day. When the lad requested Arnachallapillay to be allowed to go home, he was told that the person who bought him had received Rs. 7/- as his price, so he might go away on paying the sum to him. Having no money he was obliged to stay at the godown of Arnachallapillay without complaining along with some other people of his kind.
To His Excellency A. Beider,  
Governor of the French Establishments in India,  

Sir,  

I have the honour to address your Excellency on the 19th instant respecting the interpretation given to Act XIV of 1839 by special Agent for Foreign Affairs. Having since received a full report regarding the abduction of native British subjects and their shipment to Bourbon from the French ports, I beg to intimate to your Excellency that on looking into the extent and enormity of the now notorious and undeniable infringement of the regulations and laws of the Madras Presidency by persons residing and navigating under the Protection of the French Flag, this government have deemed it necessary to refer the question to Superior authority.

I have the honour.

Fort St. George,  
19th August 1851

H.C. Montgomery
Chief Secretary

51. Ibid., Vol. 868, 9th September, 1851

52. Ibid., Vol. 867, 19th August, 1851

53. See Appendix VI.


55. Ibid.
56. Public Consultation, Madras, Vol. 862, 27th May, 1851
57. Ibid.
59. Kondapi C., Indians Overseas 1838-1949, Oxford University Press, Madras, 1951, p.89
60. Public Consultation, Madras, Vol. 862, 27th May 1851
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid. Vol. 879. 16th March, 1852
64. Public Consultation, Madras, Vol. 926, 18th July 1854
65. Ibid., Vol. 929, 5th September, 1854
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid., Vol. 921, 7th April, 1854